CONSERVING THE WEST

A FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN: 2009-2013

THE WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM WESTERN STRATEGY
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FEW IDEAS ARE AS FUNDAMENTAL TO NORTH AMERICAN Identity AS THE GRANDEUR OF THE WESTERN LANDSCAPE. But after centuries of hard use the West’s natural value and traditions are in danger of being irretrievably lost. With focused action and careful stewardship we can create a healthy and sustainable future for the West, to be enjoyed by many generations to come.

The Hewlett Foundation envisions an ecologically vibrant West where the landscape is unspoiled and people and wildlife thrive. Through a combination of West-wide and place-based work, combined with investments to build broad-based support for conservation, the Environment Program will work to ensure the ecological integrity of Western ecosystems and species. With an eye to the effects of climate change, and respect for sustainable human uses, the Foundation seeks to fund organizations working to protect land and rivers that are essential to healthy biodiversity, and ensure their continuing protection by building broad-based support for conservation among key constituencies in the West.

Conserving the West presents the Environment Program’s strategic priorities and strategies for improving the ecological integrity of the West and the specific elements of the plan that the Foundation will implement over the next five years.

1. **Conservation of the West aligns with Hewlett Foundation Values.** The natural splendor, biodiversity, and traditional livelihoods of the West are in danger. Population growth, resource extraction, and climate change create challenges that can only be countered with new and responsible stewardship. The Hewlett Foundation is positioned to take effective action based on its experience in North American conservation.

2. **Western Conservation Goal:** The Foundation’s western conservation goal is to ensure the ecological integrity of the West to benefit wildlife and people. It will focus funding in a way that helps achieve conservation targets for hundreds of ecosystems and species in the West, from Alaska to the Gulf of California, and the Rockies to the Pacific.

3. **Specific Land, Water, and Energy Outcomes:** The Foundation will focus on four key outcomes: conserve land, increase river flows, reduce fossil fuel development while increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, and build broad-based public support. Each outcome is associated
with a detailed set of investments, and each has a rationale that ties back to the Foundation’s overall Western conservation goal.

4. **Measuring Success:** To help ensure the ecological integrity of the West, the Foundation will support grantees working over the next five years to: protect 250 million high priority acres and 4,500 river miles, reduce fossil fuel development on 20 million acres, and achieve public policies requiring at least 25% of US energy supply to be generated from renewable sources by 2025 and energy efficiency policies in place to achieve 20 percent reduction in net electricity demand by 2020, and ensure decisionmakers consistently hear from emerging influential stakeholders regarding establishing and sustaining western land, water, and energy outcomes. Quantitative metrics and targets will be used to track progress toward these five-year outcomes. Through continuous monitoring and regular evaluations, the Foundation will track progress and adjust its approach as needed. Over the next thirty years, grantees will conserve 300 million high priority acres and 8,000 high priority river miles, reduce fossil fuel development on 85 million acres, ensure that at least 25% of western energy supply is generated from renewable sources, improve energy efficiency to achieve a 20 percent reduction in net electricity demand, and build broad-based support for western land, water, and energy outcomes.
THE NATURAL SPLENDOR, BIODIVERSITY, AND TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS of the West are in danger. Population growth, resource extraction, and climate change create challenges that can only be countered with new and responsible stewardship. The Hewlett Foundation is positioned to fund effective action based on its deep experience in North American conservation.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT: HUMAN PRESSURES ARE INCREASING AT UNSUSTAINABLE RATES

The open spaces of the West are deeply embedded in the North American psyche. For centuries, the West has provided open land, economic resources, natural beauty, and, sometimes, a fresh start in life. The magnificence and scale of the western landscape have both humbled and empowered generations of Americans and Canadians.

However, centuries of extraction, hard use, and an exponentially expanding human population have taken a harsh toll on the West. Native plants and animals have disappeared, along with free-flowing rivers and intact ranches. Now Americans and Canadians must become better stewards of what we once took for granted. The Hewlett Foundation’s Environment Program believes that through careful and conscientious protection and stewardship, the West can continue to provide the natural, cultural, and economic amenities at the heart of Western life for many generations to come.

Rapid population growth and increased per capita consumption in the West have spurred urban and suburban development, and demand for energy and natural resources has grown apace. Since 1980, the number of people living in the western US and Canada has almost doubled.¹ Formerly unoccupied lands are being developed, cutting through migration routes and fragmenting the habitats of other species. Each year, two million acres of farms, forests, and open spaces are lost to shopping malls, subdivisions, and highways.

Additionally, as residents and visitors enjoy the beauty of their surroundings, recreational activities take a heavier toll on public lands. Between 1993 and 2008, the number of off-highway vehicle users in the West rose from three million to more than ten million.\(^2\)

Resource extraction has also increased rapidly, often without fully accounting for environmental impacts. With the United States focused on energy independence, the environmental and health impacts of oil and gas development in the West threaten to take a back seat in the drive toward greater domestic production. From 2001 to 2006, the rate of well drilling in the Rocky Mountain states was twice as high as in the period from 1993 to 2000 (2,053 wells per year vs. 1,036).\(^3\) For oil and gas, quick and dirty development using old technologies is faster and cheaper than more responsible methods in the short run, and state and federal regulations have failed to set a higher bar for clean extraction methods. Additionally, new technologies to extract high-carbon fuels such as oil shale and tar sands could have devastating ecological and climate consequences. Development in the Tar Sands, in Alberta, will almost surely preclude Canada from meeting its emissions reductions commitments under the Kyoto Protocol.

Water—the most fought-over resource in the West—is critical to the health of Western ecosystems. As freshwater supplies are increasingly stretched to satisfy agricultural and urban demand, ecosystems’ and species’ needs for water are often given low priority. The Colorado River, which is the primary water source for much of the arid southwest, is an example of the effects of development on the natural flow of fresh water. One of the most dammed rivers in the world, it once stretched all the way to the Gulf of California but now dries up before it reaches the sea due to heavy human use. Rivers in the West must be protected from excessive modification if they are to endure.

The iconic species of the West have also suffered from the rapid destruction of their habitat and migration paths, as have the less known species with which they share the landscape. Over two hundred species of fish, mammals, and birds are considered endangered or threatened, ranging from grizzly bears to the condor and wild salmon. These animals face the threat of habitat destruction, endangering their ability to feed, nest, migrate and survive in the shifting landscape of the West.

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GOAL: ENSURE THE ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE WEST TO BENEFIT WILDLIFE AND PEOPLE

The Hewlett Foundation envisions an ecologically vibrant West where the landscape is unspoiled and people and wildlife thrive. It will work to ensure the ecological integrity of the North American West for the benefit of current and future generations, with an understanding that the grandeur, diversity, and integrity of natural lands and waters contributes greatly to the communities of the region. By protecting open landscapes, restoring river flows and conserving riparian areas, shifting from fossil fuel development toward renewable energy sources and energy efficiency, and building broad-based support for conservation, the Foundation will make grants to help create a more sustainable future for the communities of the West.

Ecological integrity, for the Foundation’s purposes, means that natural systems function much the same way as they would in the absence of human activity. The Foundation’s Environment Program selected ecological integrity as its primary goal because the basic functioning of natural systems in the West underpins all of the other economic, scenic, and biological values in the region.

In addition, the Foundation recognizes that there will continue to be significant human development in this region. This strategy attempts to direct conservation actions away from the most intensively developed areas in order to minimize conflict with resource users and communities, and to maximize the likelihood of achieving the Foundation’s goal of ecological integrity for the region.
Specifically, the Foundation’s investments are aimed at ensuring the following:

• Sustainable human uses are supported. The Foundation recognizes that the biodiversity and the health of the environment are inextricably linked to human needs and uses. The only way to achieve the Foundation’s conservation objectives is to ensure that those objectives account for and help achieve sustainable solutions that meet the economic, cultural, and recreational needs of Western communities. This includes maximizing a wide range of ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and water purification, as well as sustainable cultural, recreational, and natural resource extraction practices.

• Threatened ecosystems are conserved through increased protection. In most cases, this means establishing a mosaic of protected and working lands.

• Key species have sufficient habitat to ensure their persistence. Some threatened and focal species require additional protection. The Foundation has selected 218 species that represent the most sensitive and/or wide-ranging species in each terrestrial and freshwater ecosystem.

• Core areas of outstanding conservation value are preserved. Large core areas of intact, wild lands (such as wilderness areas and national parks) are ecological strongholds, as well as iconic landscapes worthy of protection. While many of these areas are relatively well-protected, they may be threatened with fragmentation or other impacts in the future.

• Core areas are connected to other habitats with intact corridors. Corridors between core areas allow for seasonal migrations of wide-ranging species, as well as longer-term shifts in species distributions in response to climate change and other global changes.

• Conservation outcomes maximize greenhouse gas mitigation, and ecosystem adaptation to climate change. Western lands and rivers are a major source of energy for the US and Canada, two of the world’s largest carbon emitters, and management of those resources are integral to climate and energy policies in both countries. The Foundation’s investments are aimed at reducing the intensity of fossil fuel development and increasing renewable use and energy efficiency. In addition, the Foundation will fund efforts to maximize the ability of Western ecosystems to adapt to climate change, including protecting habitat connectivity, and increasing protection goals for areas most threatened by climate change impacts.

### What is Ecological Integrity?

- Key species have sufficient habitat to ensure their persistence
- Sustainable human uses are supported
- Threatened ecosystems are conserved through increased protection
- Core areas of outstanding conservation value are preserved
- Core areas are connected to other habitats with intact corridors
- Conservation outcomes maximize greenhouse gas mitigation

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**FIGURE 1**
As a result of pursuing these goals, the Foundation envisions an interconnected system of conservation areas that sustain the integrity of Western ecosystems and species. This system will consist of core conservation areas; key ecological linkages, where migration corridors have been preserved to ensure species mobility; and key habitat areas, where conservation ensures achievement of all ecological integrity goals. Achieving these diverse goals will require a mix of different strategies. For example, increasing wilderness designations on public lands may be well-suited to particular ecosystems or species habitats where large roadless public lands remain, but a poor fit for other ecosystems, like the central valley of California, where lands are predominantly privately owned. As a result, different strategies will be needed to target specific ecosystems, species habitat, or core areas and corridors that require conservation or restoration investments to achieve the full suite of ecological integrity objectives.

LOGIC MODEL: LAND, WATER, ENERGY, BROAD-BASED SUPPORT

The logic model specifies the outcomes that will lead to the achievement of overall ecological integrity in the West, describes quantitative targets for each outcome, and maps out the range of strategies that the Foundation will support (Figure 2). Some of the activities mentioned in the logic model include legislation or legislative activity. In those cases, the Foundation will support public education, nonpartisan research and analysis, and similar non-lobbying activities related to the logic model.

The logic model begins on its right with the Foundation’s 30-year goal for its Western work:

The ecological integrity of the West is ensured for the benefit of wildlife and people.

At the second level of the logic model, the goal is divided into four long-term outcomes, with specific quantitative targets:

- Western US and Canadian land protection increased to improve ecological integrity on 300 million high-priority acres by 2035
- Western US and Canadian river flows and riparian conservation increased to improve ecological integrity for 8,000 high priority river miles by 2035
- Western US and Canadian fossil fuel energy development reduced on 85M high priority acres by 2035; at least 25% of western energy supply generated from renewable sources by 2025; Western energy efficiency improved by reducing net western electricity demand by 20% by 2020
- Policymakers establish and sustain western conservation outcomes

The third level of the logic model describes specific activities that are required to achieve the outcomes and goal. Each outcome requires a combination of West-wide policy efforts (e.g., changing national energy policy) and place-based work (e.g., improving management in a specific Bureau of Land Management
Western Conservation

LOGIC MODEL

STRATEGY CLUSTERS

Achieve West-wide policy changes that protect roadless areas
Increase and target public funding for private land conservation
Ensure climate protection policies include ecosystem conservation and adaptation priorities
Achieve West-wide policy changes that improve river flows and protect riparian areas
Increase river flows and improve riparian land conservation through federal dam relicensing processes
Improve state instream flow water policies and funding to increase river flows and riparian land conservation
Link surface water and groundwater regulations to reduce aquifer depletion
Improve state and federal oil and gas development regulations
Prevent commercial oil shale development
Reduce demand and restrict inputs and infrastructure for high carbon fuels (tar sands, oil shale, coal)
Ensure state and national climate and energy policy restricts high carbon fuels
Establish a 25% renewable energy requirement in 11 western states
Increase renewable project and transmission line approvals and ensure they meet criteria that protect land, habitat, and water resources
Achieve electric grid integration and reliability necessary to support 50% renewable generation
Establish Western state energy efficiency standards requiring 20% reduction in net electricity demand
Align western utility economic incentives with increased energy efficiency investment
Mobilize key constituencies to support land, water, energy, and climate outcomes
Provide public feedback to decisionmakers on land, water, energy, and climate issues
Distribute analysis and research to educate decisionmakers on land, water, energy, and climate issues

OUTCOMES

Land
Western US land protection increased to improve ecological integrity on 300 million high priority acres by 2035

Water
Western US river flows and riparian conservation increased to improve ecological integrity for 8,000 high priority river miles by 2035

Energy
Western US fossil fuel energy development reduced on 85M high priority acres by 2035; at least 25% of western energy supply generated from renewable sources by 2020; Western energy efficiency improved by reducing net western electricity demand by 20% by 2030

Goal

Ecological integrity of the West is ensured for wildlife and people

Broad-based Support
Policymakers establish and sustain western conservation outcomes

Note: 11M acres of Land target overlap with Energy target
district). In either case, the Foundation’s primary approach will be to support grantees seeking to encourage lasting policy change.

PROGRAM SCOPE: THE WESTERN US AND CANADA

“The West” as defined by the Foundation stretches from the uplift on the eastern edge of the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific coast, and includes all or part of the 11 western-most states of the continental US as well as Alaska and three Canadian provinces (Figure 3).

The area contains 53 terrestrial ecosystems, 53 riparian ecosystems, 38 freshwater ecosystems, 204 threatened species, and 13 focal species. These Western lands cover 1.5 billion acres and are home to about 77 million people; they contain core areas that must be protected and connected with corridors.

The Foundation will work on the subset of this area necessary to achieve the goal of ecological integrity. As a result, there are many worthy conservation opportunities that could benefit wildlife or people in specific geographies that the Foundation will not fund because they are less important at the level of the entire West (for example, areas that are generally already well-protected, or areas where significant human development has occurred and conservation outcomes are unlikely to succeed).

The Foundation will support grantees working on conservation policy issues in the countries, states, and provinces shown in Figure 4, including work at the federal, state, provincial, and local level.

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4 These numbers do not total 358 because three focal species are also considered threatened and endangered.
The Foundation will focus on four key outcomes: conserve land, increase water flows, reduce fossil fuel development while increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy sources, and build broad-based support. Each outcome has a rationale that is tied to the Foundation’s overall Western conservation goal.

Achieving material impact requires focusing resources on priority strategies with high expected return. This section details the four key outcomes the Foundation and its grantees and partners plan to pursue during the next five years in order to achieve the conservation goal.

Achieving these four outcomes will require a combination of strategies that achieve policy changes across the West (or nationally) and others that target needs in key locales. The West-wide work supported by the Foundation will be designed to ensure that robust environmental policies are in place at the national and state and provincial level. These changes enable large-scale improvements across the West, affecting some 95% of the land area requiring additional protection.

At the same time, place-based work in key locales is necessary to address particular conservation needs in important areas. Place-based interventions are geographically specific, such as improving the land-use plan for a specific target area or directing funds toward improved river flows in a specific stretch of river. Combining place-based work with West-wide policy changes will enable the Foundation and its partners to achieve the conservation outcomes and ultimate goals.

**Land: Protect Large Open Landscapes**

Protecting the West’s large, open landscapes is at the heart of the Foundation’s strategy. Large parts of the West remain sparsely settled, and governments own most of the land in many areas (Figure 5). At the same time, some areas of high ecological importance are densely populated, with the
majority of lands in private ownership. As a result, any successful efforts must include a mix of strategies targeted at public and private lands.

Since public lands make up over 85% of the West, the management of these lands is critical to the overall ecological health of the region. Public land managers have a mandate to design plans and rules that balance conservation and human use. However, in many cases, recent public land management plans have been skewed too far towards resource extraction and human uses that ignore the need to maintain the region’s ecological integrity. Improving the integrity of these large expanses is vital to achieving the Foundation’s goal.

Similarly, although privately owned lands comprise less than 15% of the West, their predominance in some important areas, such as riparian zones, valley bottoms, and coastal regions, means that work with private landowners is also required to achieve the Foundation’s goal. In other areas, private rural and agricultural lands are important for ensuring connectivity between more highly protected National Parks and wilderness areas.

The traditional solution of purchasing lands is an expensive endeavor: the most ecologically valuable lands are often the most economically valuable as well. It is therefore imperative to work with private landowners to keep their lands intact. Fortunately, landowners are increasingly receptive to conservation, and governments are increasingly willing to provide funds for large-scale private land protection programs. The area of private land protected through conservation easements more than doubled from 2000 to 2009, to 7.2 million acres total as of 2009, and the West is conserving more acres and creating more land trusts than any other region in the nation.\(^5\) States like Colorado are inventing new solutions such as transferable state tax credits for conservation easements. Now is the time to capitalize on this momentum to motivate even more landowners to conserve their land.

To ensure that public and private lands are managed to support both conservation and sustainable human use, the Foundation will support grantees working to accomplish the following objectives:

- Achieve West-wide policy changes that protect roadless areas.
- Increase and target public funding for private land conservation toward high priority landscapes.
- Ensure climate protection policies include ecosystem conservation and adaptation priorities.

WATER: INCREASE RIVER FLOWS AND PROTECT RIPARIAN AREAS

Water is the most sought-after and fought-over resource in the West, claimed by expanding municipalities, industry, and agriculture alike. As demand for water grows along with populations and industries, the conditions of rivers and streams suffer. The ecology of most of the West’s major rivers has already been highly altered by dams. In addition, riparian areas, which are an important part of a healthy ecosystem, are poorly protected and often degraded. In the arid Southwest, where 90% of species depend on riparian areas for survival, stream-side development is nevertheless expanding, and once free-flowing rivers are in danger of drying. Policies that will balance sustainable human water use and ecosystem needs are essential to protecting the integrity of the West’s freshwater systems.

To ensure that fresh water is used responsibly and sustainably in a way that provides for both human and ecological health, the Foundation will support grantees working to accomplish the following objectives:

- Achieve West-wide policy changes that improve river flows and protect riparian areas.
- Increase river flows and improve riparian land conservation through federal dam relicensing processes.
- Improve state and provincial instream flow water policies and funding to increase river flows and riparian land conservation.
- Link surface water and groundwater regulations to reduce aquifer depletion.

ENERGY: SHIFT FROM FOSSIL FUEL DEVELOPMENT TOWARD RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

As public desire grows to be energy independent, so will the footprint of the oil and gas business in the West (Figure 6). Consequently, Western lands will continue to account for a significant portion of the oil and gas production in the US and Canada, with these extractive industries taking a harsh toll on their natural surroundings.

In addition to the oil and gas reserves covering much of Wyoming, Colorado, and Utah, production in the tar sands in Alberta is growing. Canada currently generates 1.4 million barrels a day from these sands, and is planning to triple production in the coming decade.6

The oil and gas industry is also attempting to develop oil shale in the Rocky Mountains. Because the technology remains unproven, the extent of the envi-

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Environmental damage from energy and water demands and related pollution is unknown, but anticipated to be significant.

Lastly, while renewable energy technologies provide hope for a cleaner, more sustainable alternative to meet energy demands, these facilities and transmission lines must be developed in a way that does not excessively fragment the landscape and block species movements.

To mitigate the harm done by current infrastructure and minimize the effect of future developments, the Foundation will support grantees working to accomplish the following objectives:

- Improve state/provincial and federal oil and gas development regulations.
- Prevent commercial oil shale development.
- Reduce demand and restrict infrastructure for high carbon fuels (tar sands, oil shale, coal).
- Ensure state and national climate and energy policy restricts high carbon fuels.
- Establish 25% renewable energy requirement in 11 western states.
- Increase renewable project and transmission line approvals and ensure they meet criteria that protect land, habitat, and water resources.
- Achieve electric grid integration and reliability necessary to support 50% renewable generation.
- Establish Western state energy efficiency standards requiring 20% reduction in net electricity demand.
- Align western utility economic incentives with increased energy efficiency investment.

**SUPPORT: BUILD BROAD-BASED SUPPORT FOR CONSERVATION**

The Foundation’s final strategy is aimed at cultivating and organizing strong and thoughtful voices to build permanent support for conservation. Fostering the real, though sometimes latent, conservation ethic of communities throughout the West will increase the likelihood that public policy decisions will promote conservation for future generations. The Foundation’s grants will focus on priority regions that overlap with areas where specific land, water, or energy improvements are needed. The Foundation will pursue grants focused on three main strategies:

- Mobilize key constituencies to support land, water, energy, and climate outcomes.
• Provide public feedback to decisionmakers on land, water, energy, and climate issues.

• Distribute analysis and research to educate decision makers on land, water, energy, and climate issues.

**Tools to mobilize key constituencies to support conservation**

In the long run, coalitions will split and new ones will form, champions will retire, and new conservation supporters will come of age. To ensure that the ecological integrity of the West is able to survive these changes, it is critical to build deep, broad-based support for conservation, and strong coalitions that can survive across policy cycles. To build this depth of support the Foundation will fund grantees working to accomplish the following objectives.

• Conduct grassroots and grasstops (local leaders) outreach, especially for constituencies with new and growing influence and interest in land, water, or energy issues.

• Cultivate resource users as advocates.

**Tools to distribute research and analysis to educate decisionmakers**

In an era when the existence of climate change is still a subject requiring debate in the public arena, it is especially crucial to use facts to drive policy and frame the debate. This requires both producing robust and relevant research, and communicating it convincingly to the right audiences. To contribute to the production of evidence-based environmental policies the Foundation will support grantees working to accomplish the following objectives.

• Document connections between health and sound land, water, and energy policy.

• Document connections between job growth and sound land, water, and energy policy.
TO ENSURE THE ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE WEST, OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS the Foundation will support grantees working to protect 250 million high priority acres and 8,000 river miles, reduce fossil fuel development on 20 million acres, achieve public policies requiring at least 25% of US energy supply to be generated from renewable sources by 2025 and energy efficiency policies in place to achieve 20 percent reduction in net electricity demand by 2020, and ensure decisionmakers consistently hear from emerging influential stakeholders regarding establishing and sustaining western land, water, and energy outcomes.

Quantitative metrics and targets will measure progress toward these five-year outcomes. A robust system of continuous monitoring and regular evaluations will track progress and suggest corrections. Over the next thirty years grantees will conserve 300 million high priority acres and 8,000 high priority river miles, reduce fossil fuel development on 85 million acres, ensure that at least 25% of US energy supply is generated from renewable sources, improve energy efficiency to achieve a 20 percent reduction in net electricity demand, and build broad-based support for western land, water, and energy outcomes.

METRICS

The Foundation will use metrics to define progress for each outcome. Generally these will be the number of acres or river miles improved by grantee effort. For instance, one metric of success in land conservation is the number of acres of Forest Service land designated as wilderness. Another is the number of acres closed to off-road vehicles.

Some metrics are all-or-nothing: either an area is declared a Wilderness Area, or it isn’t. Others are incremental, such as the number of acres for which conservation funding is created in a state budget. In either case, the Foundation measures success as quantitative progress towards its overall goal.

For instance, if grantees successfully change oil and gas development rules for an entire state, the pressure from oil and gas operations on the region’s ecologi-
cal integrity is decreased. Since the Foundation has mapped all lands affected by oil and gas development, it can calculate the improvement in overall ecological integrity in these areas and in the West as a whole.

The Foundation will track progress over the next five years against five-year targets. While the specific number of acres and river miles affected by these interventions may not be exact, the approximate numbers are valuable guides for implementation.

In addition, there is a need to remain flexible over the next five years, as particularly high return opportunities may arise that require a shift in resources from one outcome to another. We plan to balance this need for flexibility with a longer-term strategic focus on achieving both the long-term and five-year targets laid out in this plan.

**EVALUATION PLAN: FOCUS ON OUTCOMES**

Evaluation will consist of a set of periodic assessments of the Foundation or some sub-set of its grantmaking, based on information gathered continuously through monitoring processes, and in-depth reviews of particular grants or clusters of grants. Evaluations are intended to give the Foundation an opportunity to reflect on its knowledge in greater depth and more formally than is possible on a day-to-day basis.

Evaluation will consist of three types of reports. Annual progress reports will provide for short term reflection on the Western component of the Environment Program and progress toward targets. Annual progress reports will describe advancement towards the five-year goals during a single year. These evaluations will report changes in five or six key dashboard metrics, including major lessons learned or new developments during the year in question.

Cluster evaluations will look at all the grants tied to a particular sub-outcome and evaluate their progress and contribution to the overall goal. Finally, five-year program evaluations will be an opportunity for long term reflection on progress and strategy, as well as a place to identify the need for major course corrections before the next strategic plan.

A cluster evaluation will more carefully document the successes and lessons learned for one specific category of grants. The grant clusters correspond to the four outcomes for land, water, energy, and broad-based support. As an example of how these cluster evaluations will work, several specific questions will be examined for each cluster during its evaluation:

- Is the Foundation on track to achieve the outcome under consideration?
- How do success rates and levels of impact for West-wide policy and place-based strategies vary? Should the Foundation change its mix?
• Have changes in national or regional policy environments affected the expected return of different potential policy change approaches? Have new or different policies emerged that deserve special attention?

• Have specific approaches had higher or lower success rates and levels of impact? Has ecological integrity improved in the anticipated ways?

Finally, the five-year evaluation of the Western component of the Environment Program will be a rigorous audit of the Foundation’s success in achieving all of the goals listed in this strategy. This evaluation will examine individual grants and grant clusters as well as the overall Foundation approach. Lessons from this evaluation will be used as the Foundation refines its strategy for another five-year period.

The Foundation’s explicit metrics and targets will allow it to measure the success of individual grants in contributing to the overall goal. This accountability will increase grantee and program officer focus on results, and allow the Foundation to synthesize lessons for future grantmaking. Thus the monitoring and evaluation plan will keep the Foundation focused on outcomes and cost-effective grants.
THE FOUNDATION ENVISIONS AN ECOLOGICALLY VIBRANT WEST WHERE THE LANDSCAPE IS UNSPOILED and people and wildlife thrive. The North American West has been recognized throughout history for its iconic, rugged landscape. Historic overuse and new pressures are threatening to degrade this region. Dedicated, pragmatic efforts by the Foundation, its partners, and grantees will secure the West’s natural resources and beauty.

The next five years will be both a period of continued commitment to the Foundation’s long-time values and goals, and an opportunity to test new outcome-based processes and strategies that will enable even greater effectiveness at achieving those goals.

At a time when society is increasingly recognizing the importance of protecting natural ecosystems, the Foundation will pursue this five-year strategy with a firm commitment to realizing its vision of a healthy and vibrant West.